MARVEL

THE ULTIMATES

17

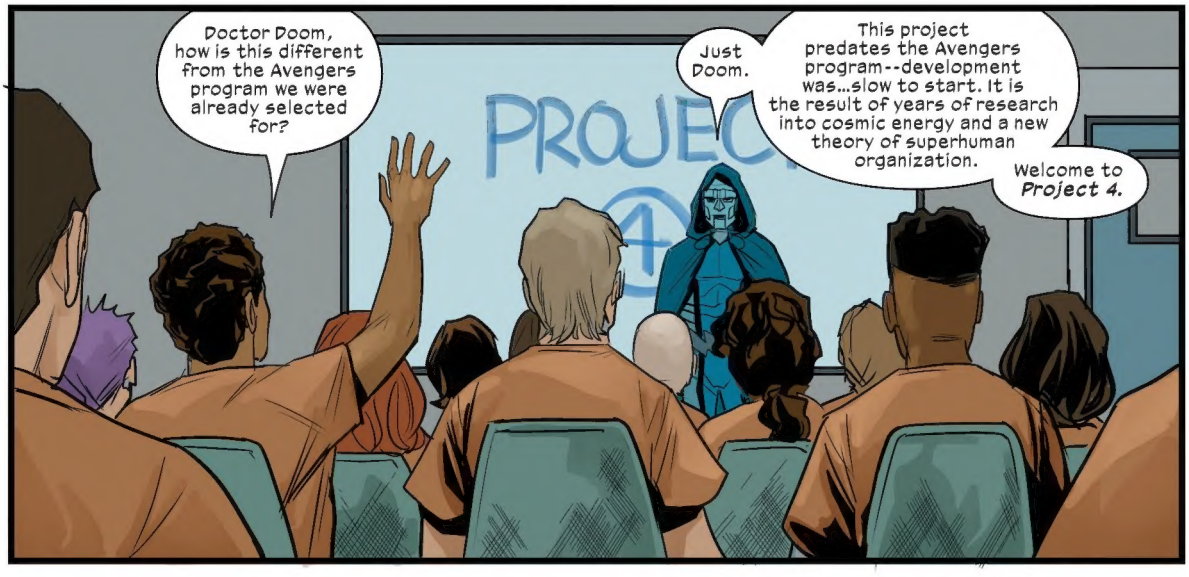
CAMP | NOTO

OCT. 2025 | RATED T+

What is the fourth dimension? Can anyone tell me? Reed?
DOOOOOM
--a prison. Time closes in on us like the walls of a cell. If you are to make it past those walls--*escape this prison you were born into*--you'll have to think in *four dimensions.*
I am ***Doom.*** I will be your teacher.
Do you have time to speak, Tony?
Sure, Doom. For you, I'll ***make*** time.

You're fourteen, Reed.
Ben, I'm a doctor! I have three PhDs! I think I can handle a little C2O6.
Well, la-di-da. Here you go, Doctor Richards.

Blurgggg...
You'll be all right. I got ya, Doctor Richards.


Doctor Doom, how is this different from the Avengers program we were already selected for?
Just Doom.
This project predates the Avengers program--development was...slow to start. It is the result of years of research into cosmic energy and a new theory of superhuman organization.
Welcome to Project 4.

Is this about Project 4?
No. Project 4 continues apace.
I recently discovered something, Tony. Potentially vital information. I felt you had to know.
Forgive me if I seem distracted... currently fighting a team of teenage mutant assassins in South America and about 21 other things...but I'm listening.

Cosmic rays are the leftover energies of the Big Bang--the universal creative impulse made manifest!
If we could harness this power, we could do anything! It's not a stretch to say we could put an end to disease, scarcity...even death, Sue!
BEEEEEEEEEEP
She's gone. The cosmic rays--
I know. I'm a doctor.
Thanks to Ms. Chavez, each of you will be bombarded with cosmic rays in a short, controlled burst. The levels must be exactly right. Too much or too little destroys human cells. Death is... creative and painful.
My analysis says you are all likely to survive exposure, but not certainly. I am not the Maker. Do you understand?
You have a choice. Each of you has a choice.
I am Doom. That is all I will ever be.
But before I was Doom, my name...my name was Reed Richards.
Uh-huh. One of the teens just spat acid on my face!

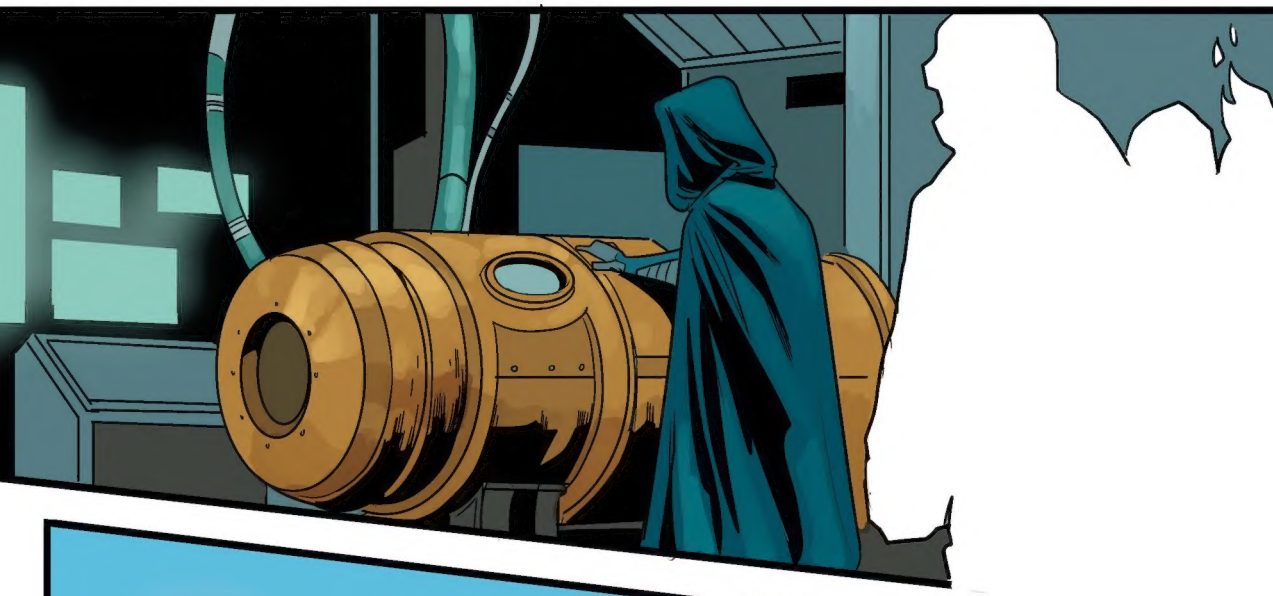
We make a good team, don't we, Sue?
Is that what we are, Reed? A team?
You'll have to think in four dimensions if you want to change the world.
You'll be formed into surgical teams. Small, *scientifically balanced* units of four. Thanks to the Immortus Engine, we'll have relative years to train.
Why four?
In another universe, Reed Richards is "Mister Fantastic," leader of the ***"Fantastic Four."*** A great hero.
You have to stop dwelling on the past, Doom. We're looking to the ***future*** now.
And "Mister Fantastic"? Kind of sounds like a piece of work.

You're a real piece of work, you know that, Reed?
I do. That's why it has to be us. You're the only three people on the planet who can put up with me.
I have always felt... incomplete. That something was missing.
When I read the Maker's files, I at last saw the shape of this absence.
--change shape and density. Your new forms can interact in myriad and surprising ways. Human circuits powered by cosmic energy.
Any four of you could neutralize a midsize air force.
You make us sound like...like weapons.
Or lab rats.
Listen to me! "Reed Richards"--in our universe, that man became Doom. In another, "Mister Fantastic." But in a third reality, he became the Maker!
It was me! It was me all along.

SUSAN STORM
JONATHA STORM
Idont wannadieIdont wannadieIdont wannadie
Abort mission! You weren't ready! I repeat, retreat--!
Oh god! Th-that thing killed Plasma!
For an eternity I wondered--*why?* Why the torture, the cruelty, the glee? Why *me?*

Hahaha!
Why?!?!
C'mon, c'mon... compensate for gravity...
That's an A.I.M. *Securi-Car* carrying their chief engineer--a man on the verge of cracking UltNet encryption. A grave threat to the entire movement.
Make sure to compensate for *gravity*...
I have seen the enemy and it is me. Under the circumstances, I am stepping back--
Stepping back? What are you *talking* about?

Huff
Huff
Wh-what?
We took a step back. *In time.*
It was over! I died! It was ***over!***
It's never over, Doom. Not for ***you.***
You'll die a million times, if it amuses me. You'll die until it doesn't. But don't worry...I'm working on something much ***worse*** than death.

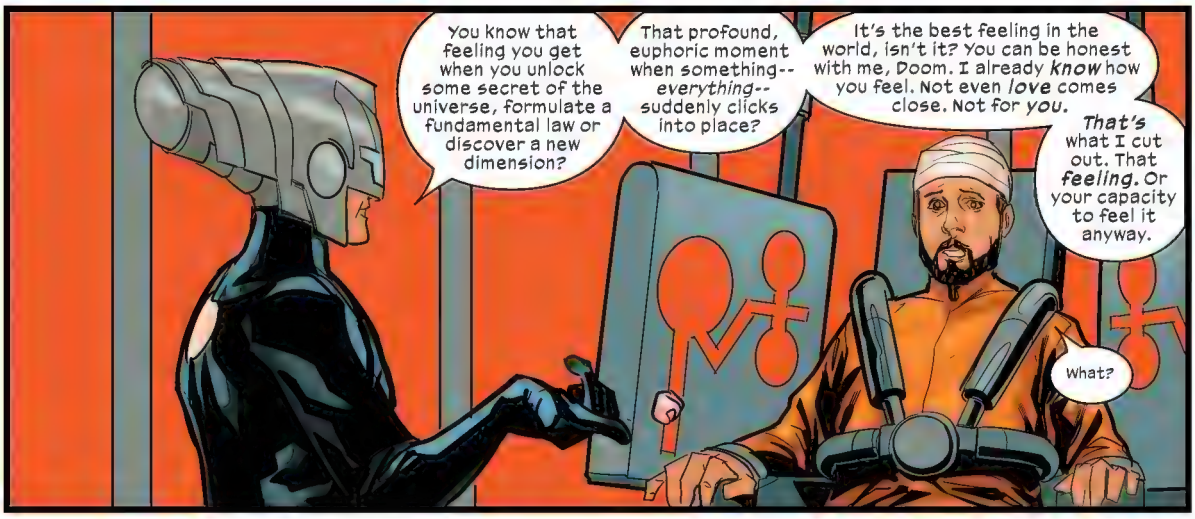


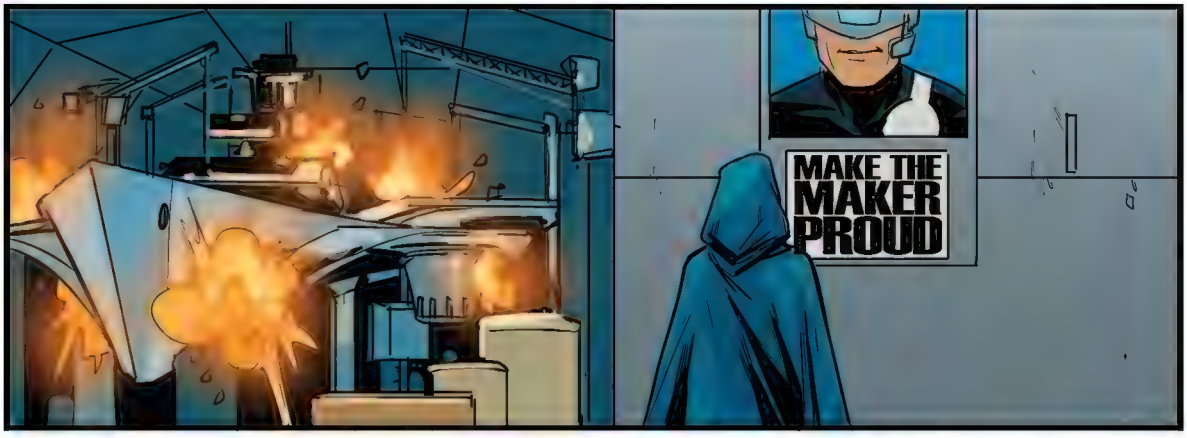
KABOOOOM

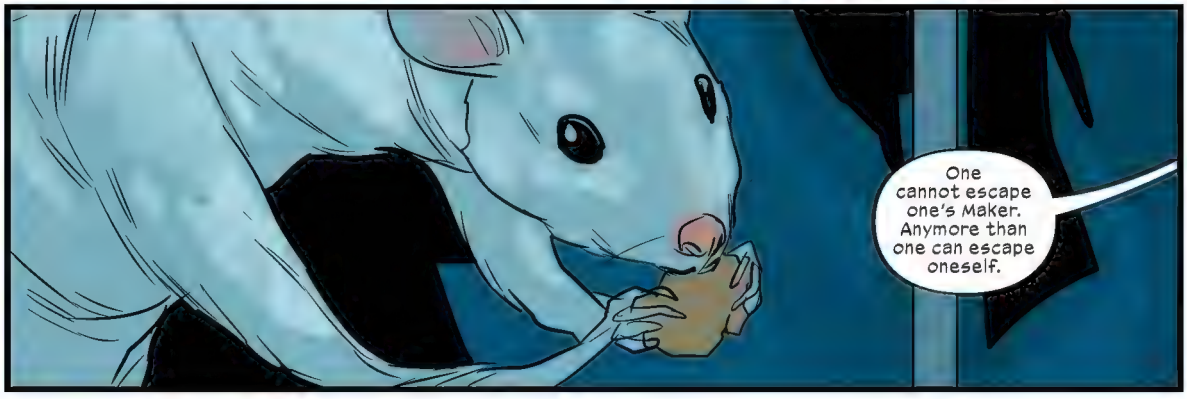
Don't you understand? Every plan, every insight, every breakthrough--*he had them first!* Any hope we had just went up in flames!
All our preparation--all we've sacrificed--all compromised! ***I*** am compromised!
But I already ***knew*** that.

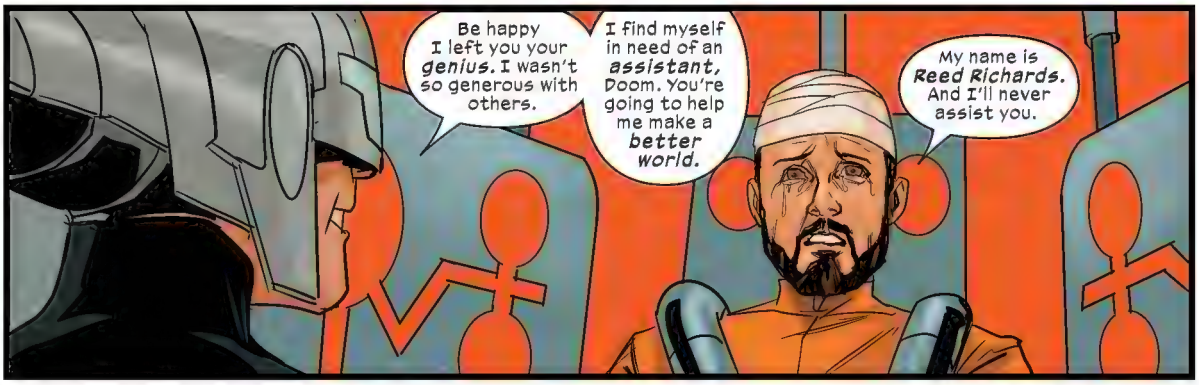
My god, the *filth* in here, Doom! How can you stand the inside of your own head? I can hardly see... a*HA! There* it is!
I'd recognize it *anywhere.* Though it is quite a bit *smaller* than mine.
Please, *stop!*
I won't stop, I swear, I'll never--
STOOOOOOPPP!
Just a moment longer!
You... *knew?* How?
From this conversation. I saw it months ago. Though I forget how it *ends...*
And you...said nothing?
Didn't I? I guess it didn't seem relevant.
I mean, what does it change?

Now *there's* a change for the better! The extraction was a complete success!
This little bit of gray matter was the troublemaker.
E-extraction? What is...? Wh-what did you *take?*
Captain, I have encountered more-than-expected difficulty. I require immediate emergency extraction.
Doom?! I told you to take a ***team*** *to get those catalysts--*
I will remember it for next time!
The new catalysts have been located and extracted, Doctor Doom.
Just Doom. Well done, Gravity Girl. Your progress these months has been remarkable.
Is that ***emotion*** I hear in your voice, Doom?
No. ***Hope.***
It changes ***everything!*** He knows me better than I know *myself.*
It's ***hopeless,*** Tony. It always was. I was a fool to think otherwise, even for a moment.


You know that feeling you get when you unlock some secret of the universe, formulate a fundamental law or discover a new dimension?
That profound, euphoric moment when something-- *everything*-- suddenly clicks into place?
It's the best feeling in the world, isn't it? You can be honest with me, Doom. I already ***know*** how you feel. Not even ***love*** comes close. Not for ***you***.
That's what I cut out. That ***feeling***. Or your capacity to feel it anyway.
What?


MAKE THE MAKER PROUD

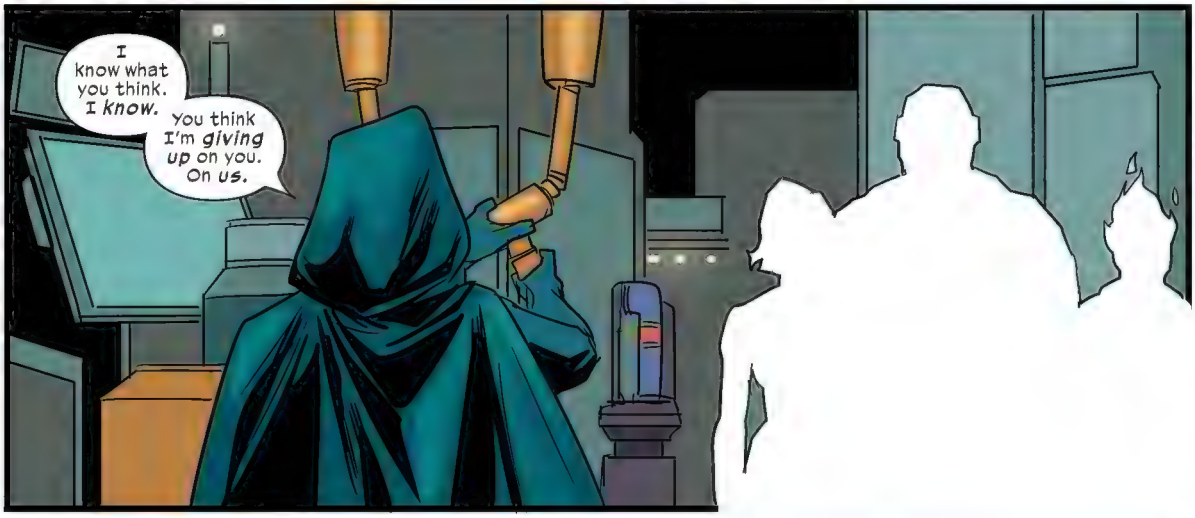

One cannot escape one's Maker. Anymore than one can escape oneself.

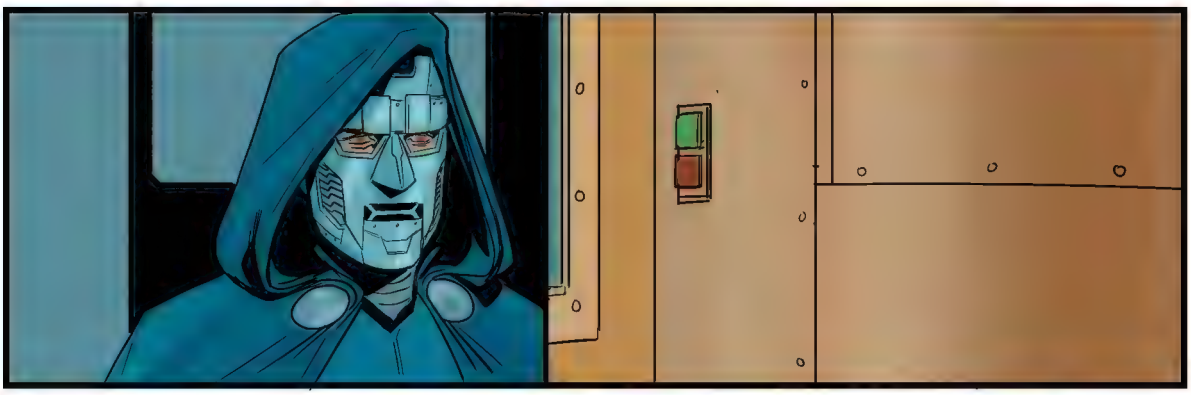

Be happy I left you your *genius.* I wasn't so generous with others.
I find myself in need of an *assistant,* Doom. You're going to help me make a *better world.*
My name is *Reed Richards.* And I'll never assist you.

I will make a better world in this one's place. Even if there is no place for me *in* it.

I have to go. No matter how many of myselves I create, it never seems to be enough. Those teenagers *killed* me.
I can't force you to stay, Doom. The Ultimates is, by design, a *choice.*
I'll just say--this thing might not work with you, but it *definitely* doesn't work without you.

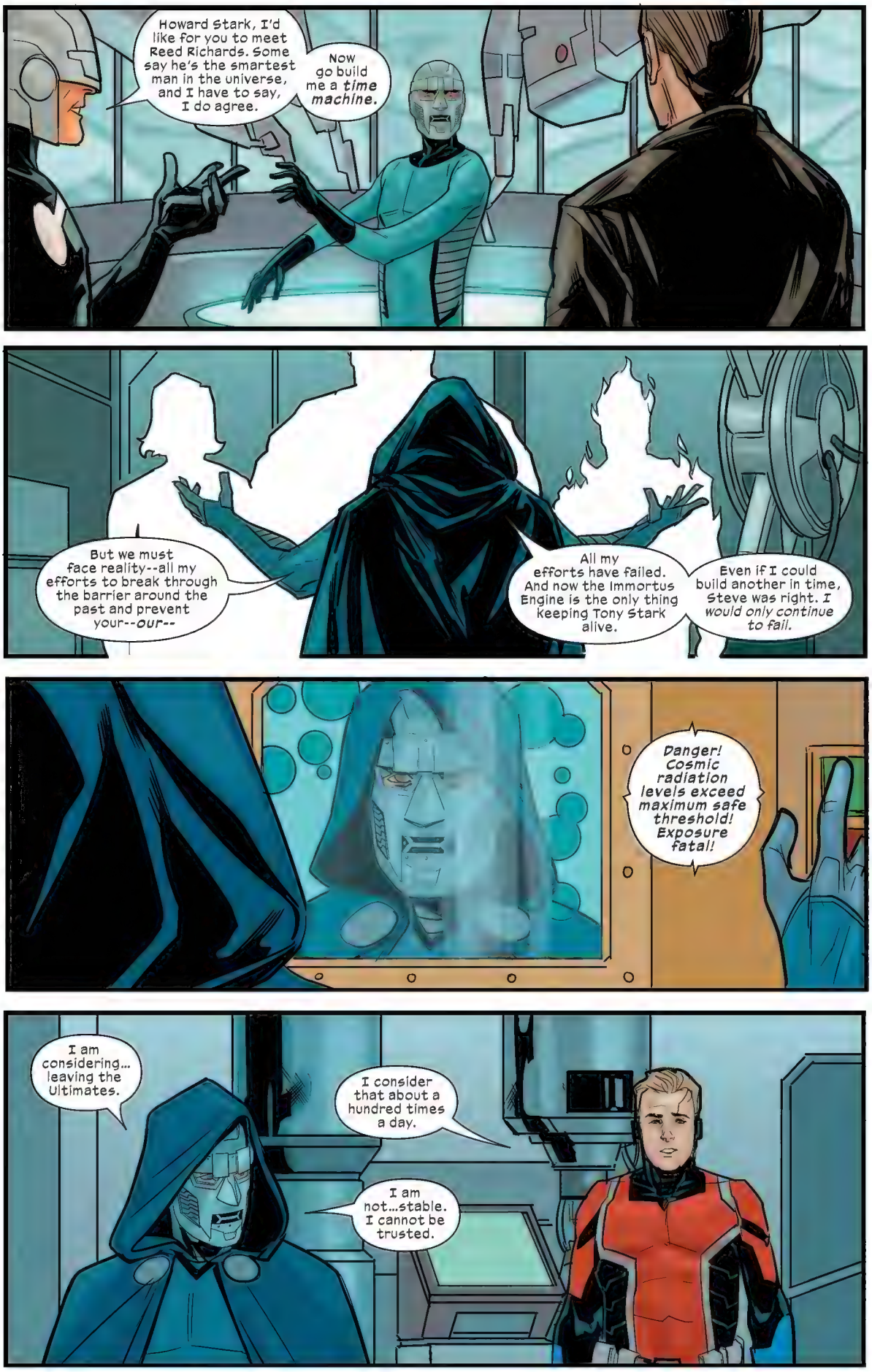
The math here doesn't work. Redo it. Then finish the synthesis of the Neutronium-4 and this week's batch of Unstable Molecules, and then clean the lab. I want it *sparkling,* Doom.
But the lab...the lab is almost *infinite,* Maker.
And?


I know what you think. I *know.*
You think I'm *giving up* on you. On *us.*



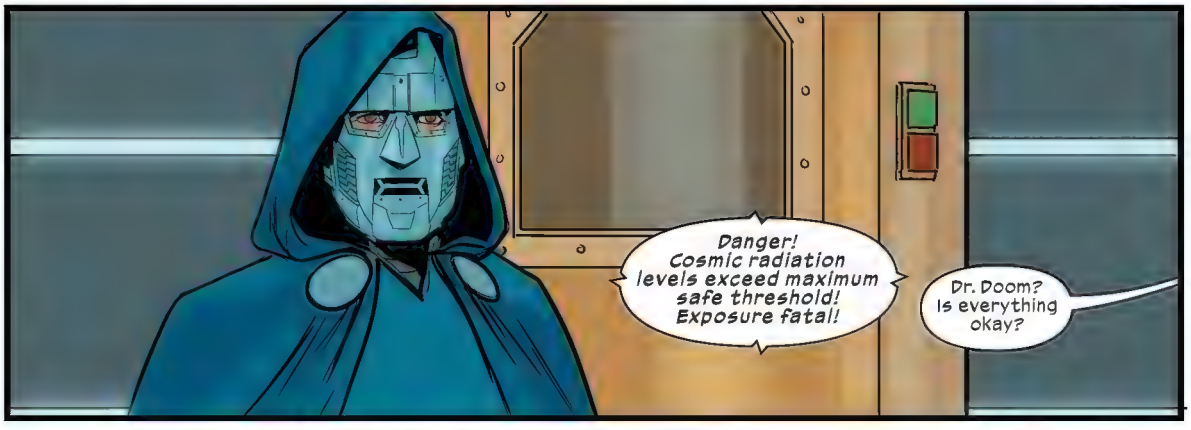
Hey, Doom.
Henry.

Where's my time machine, Doom?!
I am try--UGH!
But I am *trying*. I swear it. I would do anything to be with you.
CLICK
So...want some company?
...
You know.
About you being the Maker or whatever? Well, yeah. Everybody does. It's all over the UltNet.
Wonderful.

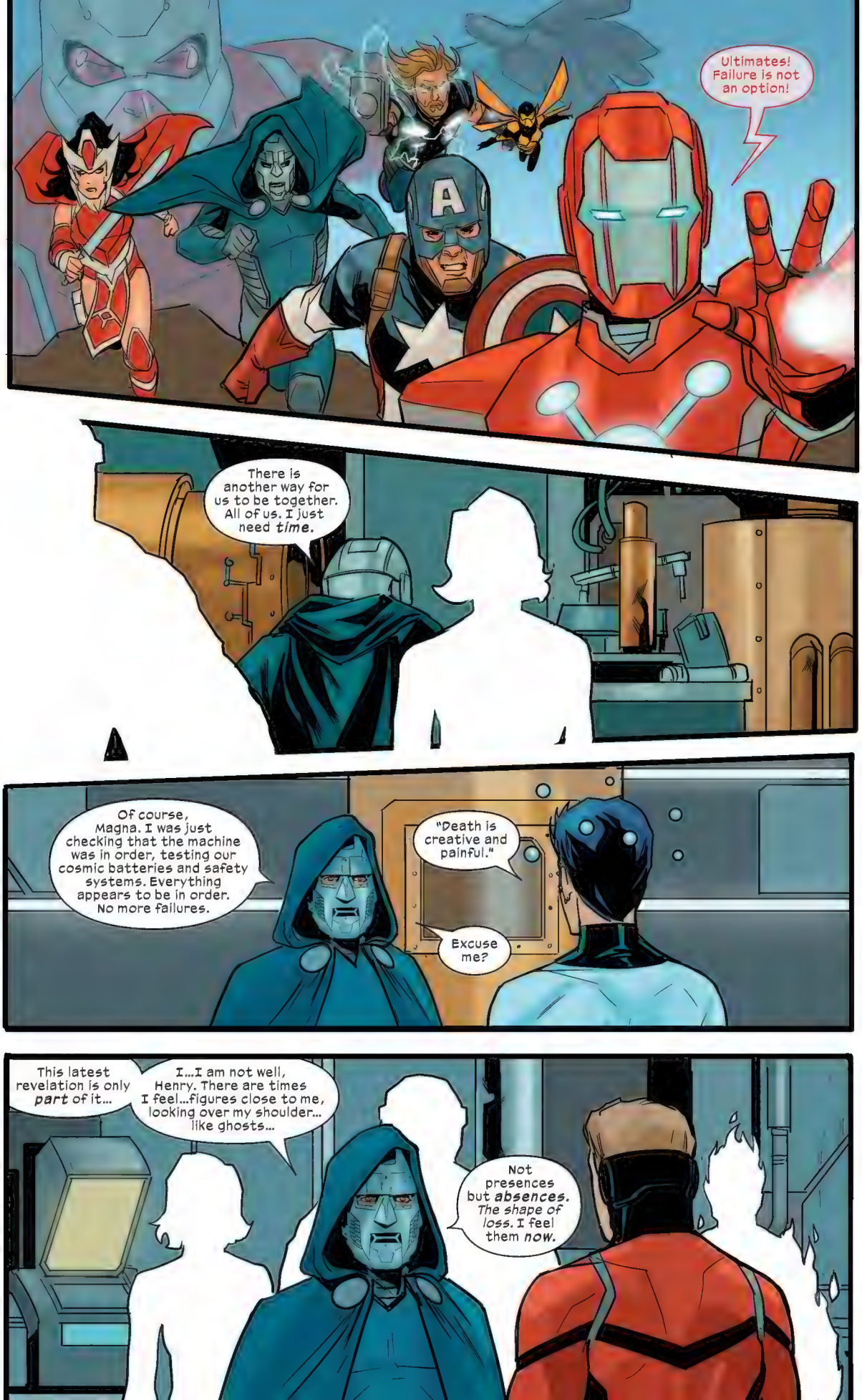

Howard Stark, I'd like for you to meet Reed Richards. Some say he's the smartest man in the universe, and I have to say, I do agree.
Now go build me a *time machine.*
But we must face reality--all my efforts to break through the barrier around the past and prevent your--*our*--
All my efforts have failed. And now the Immortus Engine is the only thing keeping Tony Stark alive.
Even if I could build another in time, Steve was right. I *would only continue to fail.*
Danger! Cosmic radiation levels exceed maximum safe threshold! Exposure fatal!
I am considering... leaving the Ultimates.
I consider that about a hundred times a day.
I am not...stable. I cannot be trusted.

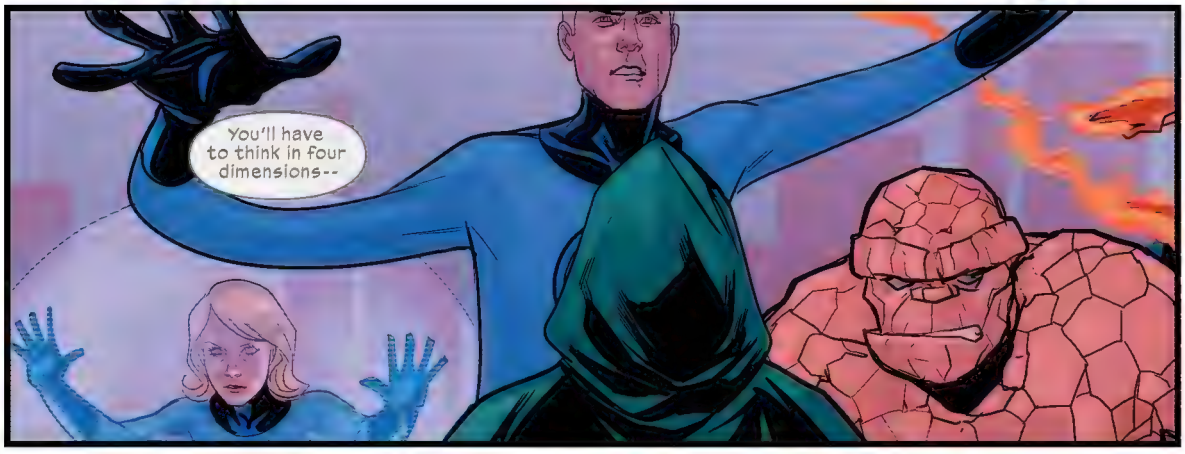
My father sacrificed himself to trap the Maker in the City and give us time. We have two years before he returns to fix the world.
What do you say?

Yes, I have *failed.* But I have not given up.


Danger! Cosmic radiation levels exceed maximum safe threshold! Exposure fatal!
Dr. Doom? Is everything okay?

I had pretty much the same thought, back when I had my little *revelation.* You know what Cap told me?
"His failures are not your failures. ***His*** sins are not ***yours.***" Annoyingly right, as always.
You decide who you're going to be, Doom.


Ultimates! Failure is not an option!
There is another way for us to be together. All of us. I just need *time*.
Of course, Magna. I was just checking that the machine was in order, testing our cosmic batteries and safety systems. Everything appears to be in order. No more failures.
"Death is creative and painful."
Excuse me?
This latest revelation is only *part* of it...
I...I am not well, Henry. There are times I feel...figures close to me, looking over my shoulder... like ghosts...
Not presences but *absences*. The shape of loss. I feel them *now*.


You'll have to think in four dimensions--

I'm building something here. Inspired by you...by *us*. What could have been.
I'm going to harness cosmic rays for the cause. I'm going to *change the world.*

That's what you said. If you didn't get the cosmic energy dosage exactly right. "Death is creative and painful." Right?
Yes. That's right.
Well, come on, we're all celebrating the gamma bomb facility mission. Don't sulk in here by yourself, Doctor Doom...

Ghosts? I see those sometimes. Only for me, it's the guy I was before the accident. I don't think they ever go away. I think they just kind of follow you around forever.
It used to really bother me. This thing I couldn't shake. Then one day, I had this thought, and I've felt better since.

I'm so sorry!

I owe it to them. To the world. Yes, I do.
...Because the Maker didn't get *all* of it.

Just Doom. And no. No, thank you, Magna. Enjoy yourself. My place is here.
No it's not. Don't make me magnetically drag you there by your *mask*.
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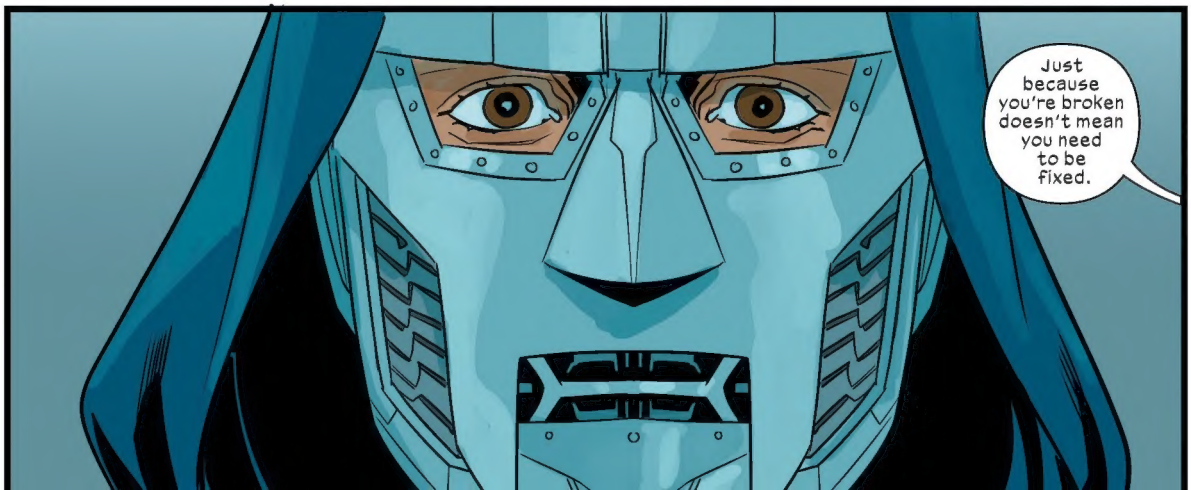
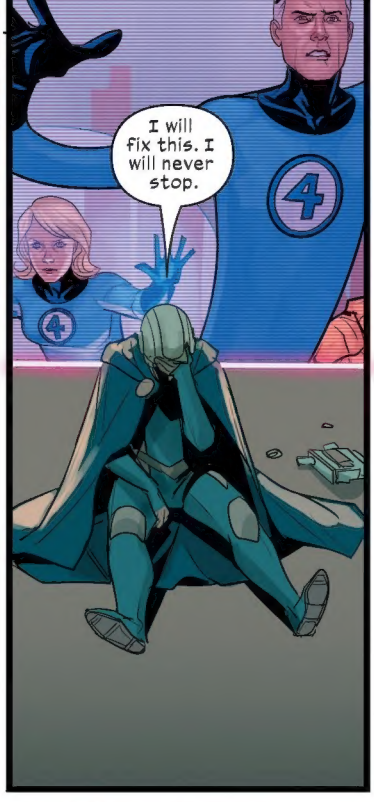
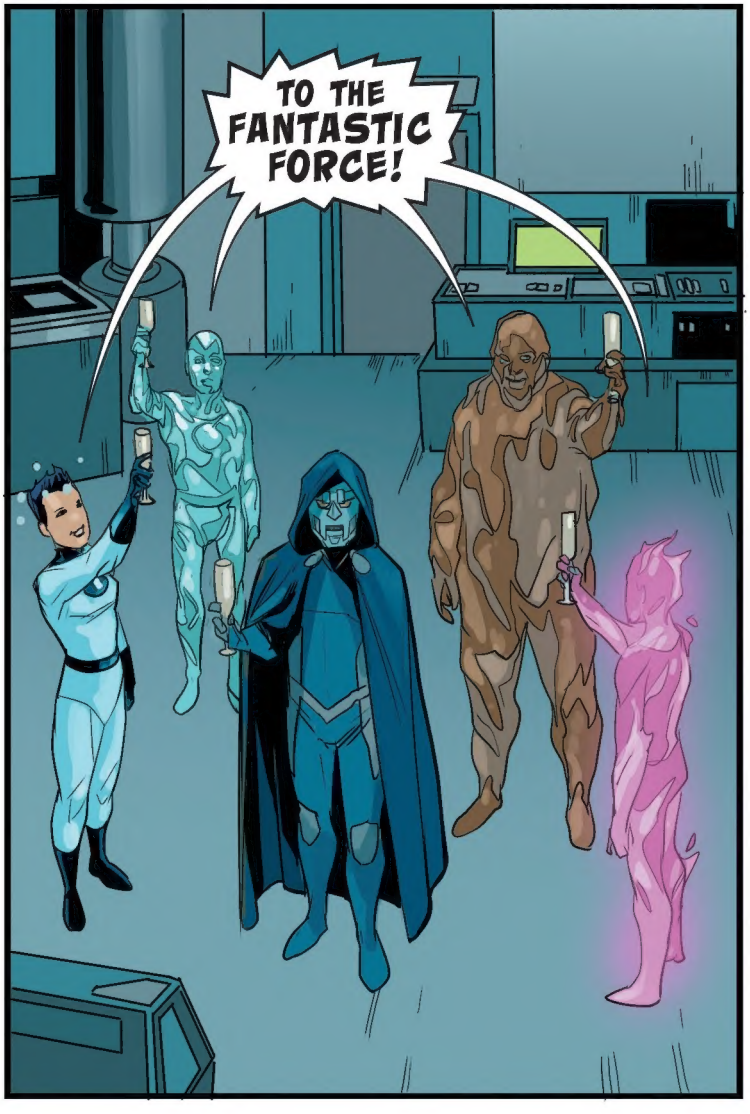
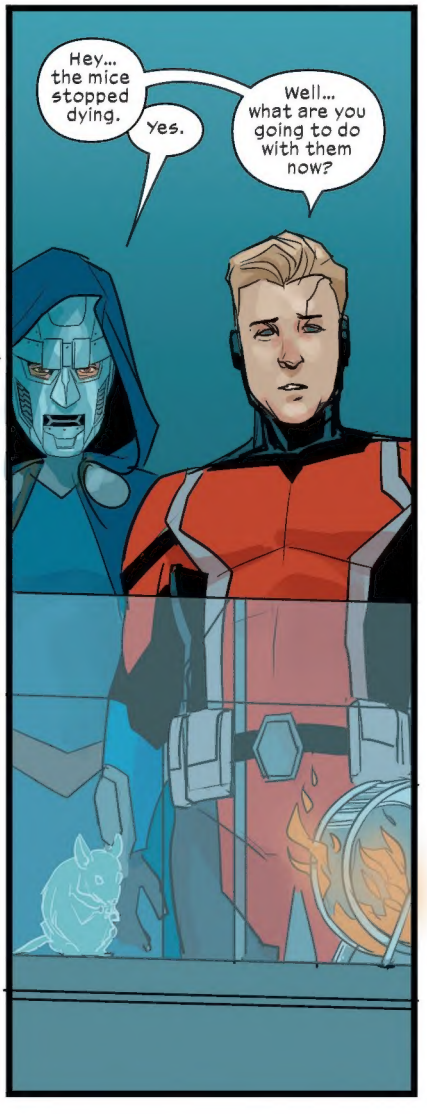

Just because you're broken doesn't mean you need to be fixed.


I will fix this. I will never stop.

I will do what I can for them. I will *honor* you all.


TO THE FANTASTIC FORCE!


Hey... the mice stopped dying.
Yes.
Well... what are you going to do with them now?

When the mice stop dying, the Fantastic Four will return.
I will have my revenge on the Maker...
...and then I will come to you. My *family*...
...in death we will be *together* again.
"We will be *free*."
ONE MONTH REMAINING...

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